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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Introduction to Pashto Word's Characteristics

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the distinctive characteristics of Pashto words, focusing on their phonological, morphological, and semantic features. Pashto, an Eastern Iranian language spoken primarily in Afghanistan and Pakistan, exhibits a rich lexical system shaped by historical, cultural, and linguistic influences. The research highlights the unique sound patterns of Pashto words, including retroflex and aspirated consonants, vowel harmony, and stress placement. Morphological processes such as inflection, derivation, compounding, and reduplication are analyzed to show how new words are formed and grammatical relations are expressed. Additionally, the semantic properties of Pashto vocabulary, including synonymy, polysemy, and borrowing from Arabic, Persian, and English, are explored. The study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of Pashto word structure and meaning, contributing to broader discussions in comparative linguistics, lexicography, and language pedagogy. The introduction part explains the thesis of this article which is word's morphological characteristics. Its literature at the other hand explains how unusual the topic is. It means, the morphological aspect of Pashto word is still not explored. After literature review the full description of the article title is provided. in article we, the authors of this article covered passive case of Pashto word which we admire the most. In discussion part of this article further research is recommended. The conclusion part has a brief summer of the entire study. In this study, we claim that we found that words have different structures, as well as meaning is also subjected to change. Words not have different meanings in different contexts but also change its shape accordingly.

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Introduction

The word (word) is a linguistic unit that does not have a wide definition, but a common definition is that; it is a small meaningful unit of language, and it is not divisible. If it is divided, sounds are obtained from its division (Zyar, 2005, P. 83). The above definition is incomplete, because prefixes and articles, also have meaning and they are considered fixed and specific, because each meaning is related to specific words. Words differ from one another base on their literal meaning, but words have collective feature, because when we say, or read (page) we know that we can name any page with this word. Likewise, (flower) and other similar words also have collective meaning (Ludin, 1399, P. 54). Bloomfield considered word a meaningful element in his works (Palmer, 1395, P. 83). Some scholars say that this type of word is written independently. In Pashto language the articles are also written independently, or derived words are written independently, such words are not of one morpheme, but they are made of two morphemes, or two parts, they are which written together. From the other hand, the way how words are written does not depend on the language, but it depends on writing. As a matter of fact, these are two separate things. We do not want to discuss the definition of word with all details, but we want to discuss miscellaneous characteristics of word.

Words are created from sounds as linguistic symbols. Words are mental objects, words have verbal meaning, words are the infrastructures of language related with external world. Also, vocabulary is connected to grammar.

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Words demonstrate different meaning based on internal and external factors in language. Words have relationships with other linguistic elements. In fact, this research is allocated to clarifying the above-mentioned aspects.

The value of this research lies in demonstration of the characteristics of vocabulary, so that we may not be encountered problems in the realization of meaning. Also, we set the following objectives to be achieved. For instance, this article will help readers to understand the different characteristics of vocabulary usage and the primary, and secondary meaning of a word, and the concept of its transformation. In addition, the readers will also understand the ambiguity of meaning.

The study of Pashto words' characteristics has drowned increasing attention among linguists, Philologists, and anthropologists due to the language historical depth, structural uniqueness, and culture.

Research Method

This is a review-based, descriptive-analytical study. Primary sources include published Pashto linguistic books which cover the morphology, and etymology of Pashto word. The study identifies and analyzes the characteristics of Pashto word which is an interesting and needed topic for linguists and research scholars. Books and materials on Pashtu word in the view of linguistics were consulted alongside with linguistic books written by renowned linguists. Relevant materials were collected and divided them based on thematic categorization to explore the entire study of Pashto word characteristics.

Results and Discussion

Word is the collection of sounds that are used as an independent morpheme outside of the language. It names an object, event, or action. A word is a collection of sounds that are combined to name a thing outside of the language. Words as concepts have shared features (Prototypes) in a meaningful domain. Some of these features are closed, or nearer to others in characteristics, and some of them are approximately different, such as, the word (water) makes meaningful domain for all flowing things, but are different from drinking water. Also, river water, sea water, raining water, and snow water, sweet water, bitter water of the various fruit juices, spring water, wound water, are shared with the word (water), but milk, blood and wound water which are not drinkable, and have color, and smelling are different from drinking water in general sense. The words have mental, verbal, physiological, and physical characteristics, which are explored as follows.

From saying the "word" first an image appears in the brain, and the sound signal is converted into sound images. Then vowel organs change it to sounds, and by this way words and language are created. Based on Saussure's words, Mehri says that when two people talk to each other, the first thing in their minds is the mental facts and concepts. The vocal concepts of these facts, which are the correspondents of linguistic sounds are utilized to concepts which have relationship with them. The concept creates corresponding sound image in the brain. This phenomenon is completely psychological, which results in physiological behavior, the sound waves reach to the listener's ears. This process is repeated in the listener. Sound is reached to brain from the ear through physical process. This vocal image in the brain creates or make sense, and meaning through neural connection that are related to the concepts (Mehri, 2004, P. 51).

The aim from above remarks is that; words in addition to other characteristics, as a collection of sounds, also have psychological, phrenological, and acoustic or physical characteristics, and are also mental phenomena whose locus is the brain.

Vocabulary Feature

Word names things outside the language. Healthy people choose to convey meaning in their own context. In order to avoid errors and confusion in meaning, words are combined. They use words to communicate with each other. They also combine sounds in a specific order and make mistakes. In this regard, it is said in linguistics and epistemology: The wise speakers correct and monitor errors of words, phrases, sentences, of target sounds, this is the best characteristics of a healthy person's natural language (Nilipur, 2002, P. 25), and (Yamin, 1396, P. 24). A word has a meaning, and a meaning unit of a language. This means that another characteristic is the connection of meaning with external object. The meaning of words is connected to external objects. On the one hand, a word is as a linguistic unit, it is mental, and then it is vocal, and still external, and then it's external connection. By hearing the word (listen), the listener makes an image, or the realization of something in his/her mind. This is the relationship of the word to the object. Plato for the first time discussed the meaning, the relationship between the thing and its meaning. This relationship is considered natural, but Aristotle and his followers considered this relationship a convention between meaning and object (Safawi, 1370, P. 52).

Aristotle said that language is the product of agreement and convention. Stoics also considered the relationship between object and meaning to be conventional (Hamidi, 1402, P. 49). Having meaning is another characteristic of a word, so what does meaning mean? There are many scholars who have presented their theories. We will mention a short definition that is somewhat agreed upon, the relationship between signifier and signified. The signifier is a linguistic symbol, and the signified is the object. Or, when we say a signifier, the signified is the object, because the signifier signifies or demonstrate it. The purpose of this note is to show that external objects have relationship with the language. It means, the signifier names the object called referent. Referent is wide or broad than the concept, because referent searches two connected sides of meaning. Referent from one side explores the element of language, and form other side, it deals with nonlinguistic tests, meaning is the linguistic relationship that exists between words (Zyar, 2017, P. 84).

The other important feature of word is that words do not always have the same meaning and are not permanent, both change their form and meaning. Words change over time. Change of meaning has many causes mentioned as bellows.

1. The internal causes of language: these are reasons that happen within the language. This is a historical change. Words change over time. For example, the ancient meaning of the word (dareez) is member (member is something used by religious preacher in the mosque. They sit on it and invites people to religion.), but now the meaning of (dareez)has changed, and it now manes “position and stage”, and the word (halak) which means (boy) in English. Its ancient meaning is (small), but it is used to mean (boy) male child. Also, another word in Pashto (Wiyala) which means (stream) in English, its ancient meaning is homeland as it is mentioned in a Pashto literature reliable book (Tazkiratul auliya).
2. Political reasons: with the change of regimes, new political nominations are created.
3. Cultural reasons: human relationship is not always the same in the field of life. New behaviors create new names.
4. Institutions. With cultural and political changes, the names of institutions, and organizations also change, and then they gain credibility. The purpose of credibility is that the new word is recognized by the people and then replace it with the terms of a higher culture, so when they do not feel comfortable, they give priority to words of higher culture.

Scientific achievements also create new nominations which leads to the creation of new words and new meaning. The internal causes for the creation of words belong to the language itself. By using contexts, or by introducing synonyms, words are used for a second meaning that is removed from the primary meaning, for example, in simile, allusion, metaphor, intensification of weakness of the meaning, and exaggeration.

Another characteristic of words is that either they expand their meaning, such as the word (guest) which is now used in conversation. Nowadays when someone is invited for interview to a television program, he is also a guest. In ancient times the guest would was the one who would be invited by someone to his house, and the owner of the house was called the host. Now the runner of a television program also is also called the (host). or when someone leaves his country and immigrates to another country, that country is the host country. and who leaves his country and goes to another country the country is called the host country. Also, words sometimes narrow their meaning, such as the old meaning of (boy). It has been used to called to (few or little things), but now only refers to a male child.

The other characteristic of words is its similarity and closeness in form and meaning to other word. For example, synonyms are words that are different in forms and their meaning are close. The words whose sounds are not similar, or alike, but their meanings are the same or alike, or close in meaning, they are called synonyms. The similarity between different words is in the concept, or in the object they are named, because synonyms are sometimes considered to have the same meaning. Synonyms sometimes have similar meaning. In the first stage of dialect and writing accuracy. synonyms are called true and complete words, but later when they are encountered with other words in meaning, or when ambiguity arises, defects in meaning is created, and this dialect changes to another synonyms word (Zyar, 1394, P. 93).

The examples of close synonyms are as below. Beira, weira, dar, tars, weiridel,. Also, when two or more than two words are used for only one meaning, they are called close synonymous (homonyms) words, for example, naroogha, najoora, nasaza, bimar, and mareez (Reshtin, 1394, P. 9).

Synchronization (Similar ammoniums)

Homonyms are different words that have the same form, but different in meaning, or they are compound words that have the same form and sound. these words are not related to each other on etymology base, but later they become related in terms of phonological changes, the examples are mentioned as below:

(toor rang) which means black color in English. (tuhmat) in English it means accusation, and net. (maira) it means stepmother in English. (dakhta) – means desert in English. (kara) in English it means standard and with). (khur)it means in English, sister, khur also means scattered, and the one who eats. Dangar – in English it means beast. (brid) in English it means attack, and boarder between two things (Hossam, 1395, P. 42).

Words may be poly-semant. Poly-semant words are those words that in addition to their primary meaning, they also have other meanings, they are called transitive meaning. In naming of words, they move very easily from one thing to another, and from one thing to another (Ludin, 1355, P. 67).

Some words are antonyms. Antonyms are two or more than two words that have apposite, conflict meaning for example, difference, contrast, and contradiction. By other words, antonyms are those words which have contradiction in meaning, for example, (good – evil), (earth – sky), (fire – water), and (death – life). Antonyms are contradictory words are within a certain framework, but if they are taken out of the framework, they are no longer contradictory words. Antonym words are found in large quantities in adjectives and adverbs, but there are few in nouns and verbs. Dr. Ludin says that complete contradiction in language occurs when contradictory words are used together in their own style. These styles come in two basic forms. The interrogative sentence style, which has two possible meanings, when it is used as the basic part of interrogative sentence which relates by the article (if), for example, (She wondered if this is a dream or a wakeup call). Second, it related to imperative sentences and is a part of a sentence that is joined by the word (by), for example, (Sisters and brothers! You must know that this country will be prosperous and well-constructed one day) (Ludin, 1355, P. 100).

Specific ammoniums

Specific ammoniums are those words that have the same written form and phonetic but their meaning is different. They are divided into following three types.

1. Native ammoniums: this include the same sounds, or the same phoneme structure, as well as the same morphological structure, prefixes, and suffixes, but different roots, such ammoniums are created using synonyms, or they are created based on changes in the phonemic laws of the language itself, such as (arawal, majborawal) which means to oblige. Its root in Pashto is (ar) and (kawal) (wal) means (to do) in Pashto, by dropping the auxiliary verb (Kawal). (Kawal) resembles with (garzawal) which mean to pour, or to overturn someone from doing something. Also, in Pashto language the word (kam, lagkam, kum), and the word (guram) in Pashto means (I see) is first person singular pronoun, and in the first (kam), it is the word related sound. Another feature is that some words are opposite with others in meaning.

2. Homophone: In Pashto language homophones are created as a result of the process of certain phonemic laws. For example, (ha) phoneme, when it comes at the beginning, middle, or at the end of some words, it changes to (alef) phoneme, for example in (hati – ati),(qaher – kar), (hewad – awad),(qahri - kahri), in the above examples, the morpheme (ha) is changed to (alef) morpheme in the words like (haider - ayder), (hayat - ayat), (ihtyat - aytiat).

3. Ammo-morpheme: These are the words whose structure is not the same in all cases. Such as in these Pashto words; (arathawal, it means to expand, or to widen). If they are used for (throwing) then the word (arthawal), changes to (warthawa, warthawi, arthaum), and when they are used for the (expand) it becomes (arathi) for example; (da jamee arathi di) which means (these clothes are wide). The Pashto letter (long ya) is a multitask phoneme. Sometime it is used as (third person singular pronoun), and used as empathic pronouns.

Homographs: These are words that only have the same written form, for example, the Pashto word (loor) which means (daughter) I n Englsih. (Loor) is used for three diffenet meanings such as, (direction, sickle, and good intention). Also, in Pashto the word (shara) means uninhabited land, and it also means, to be driven out. The Pashto word (wana) means tree, and mean, height. Also, in Pashto (ghoota) means (knot) in English, and it also means immersion in water.

Considering these examples, it can be said that words with different meaning that are only written the same form, but

differ in sound are considered homographs. Such similarities arise due to the of defects of suitable grapheme, because there is not a grapheme to represent every sound in Pashto. Another characteristic of word is that it can be either active, or passive.

Active voice: It would be difficult to find a good standard to know how long it takes for a word to come to mind, or how long it takes for another word to come to mind easily and without interruption. A suitable word during speech, which conveys its purpose is understood by the person, who hears or reads it. Such words are rarely used in everyday life. Active and passive words are relative among speakers. Some words look active to some people, while for some other people other words are active, or passive words (Yamin, 1396, P. 94). For a doctor medical terms, for a student, chapter, marker, class, teacher, and credit are active words, but for other speaker of Pashto, they are not active words.

Historical and archaic words are not included in the group of active words. Archaic, and historical words, also differ from each other. This means that historical words come into use in the language after a while, and archaic words are included in the group of unused words. Active words are words that come to mind without thinking during the process of speaking, and are easily used in speech and are used in daily life. This kind of words, both the original words of the language (words with the primary meaning) and the borrowed words can be included, such as in Pashto language, the words (the ruler, the judge, the oppressed, the payer, the hajj, the doctor, the engineer, the teacher, the mullah (religious scholar), the road, the glass, samovar, computer, pen, book, pencil, are familiar to the audience which come to our mind easily and are easy to be understood by the listener. The words with primary meaning such as border, field, cow, house, room, wall, guest, bed, and nose are pronounced in the same way.

Passive words

Passive words are those words which are not remembered when they are used, but when they are heard, or read, their meaning is understood. Based on the vocabulary store that, if stored words were not in groups of words, it would be difficult for the active words to be remembered as active words when needed and to come to mind in memory and to remove the need, or if there were active words which could provide opportunities to assist in the time of need, then the vocabulary would not exist in this vastness. There for these words exist in groups in language (Ludin, 1355, PP. 74 - 75).

The other feature is the grammatical characteristics of words:

In Pashto language words are divided into two types based on their gender.

Some words are feminine, and some are masculine. Feminine nouns are identified by the following ending sounds. Name ending (alef), they are not masculine noun, but they are the nouns of feminine gender, for example, Brishna, Zala, ware.

Nouns with (zwar) at the end are feminine, for example, Pana, wana.

Nouns ended by long vowels are also feminine, for example, Kharoo, bizoo.

In Pashto language, those nouns which are ended with (Ya) for example, sheedi. The noun that is in primary case, and that is not the name of profession is also a feminine noun, such as doosty, Khady, Khpalwi.

A noun that is ended with (ya) which has a tail are also feminine gender's noun. For example, laki, rasi, lari, merghi, shari, kurthi. Masculine nouns are recognized as follows.

The signs of masculine noun: All those nouns which are ended with consonant sound are considered masculine nouns, for example, meiz, diwal, koor,and those nouns which are ended with soft (Ya) considered masculine nouns too, for example, zamari (a male person), pradi (), largi (wood in), pasarli (spring), dubi(summer), jami (winter), mangi (water earthen pot). A noun that is ended with Known (waw) also considered masculine nouns for example, Aloo, kachaloo, kahoo, makoo, patoo.

Also, nouns that are ended with (ə) considered as masculine noun, for example, Neika (grandfather), tara (uncle), wada (wedding), liwa (wolf), pasa (sheep).

Irregular noun:

1. Those feminine nouns which has masculine sign, and are used for female, or they are female by gender, for example, wiyala, khaula, chara.
2. Those nouns which are ended by double diphthongs, considered as masculine nouns for example, (aw) palaw, zoy, ew.
3. Nouns that are ended (i) providing that they are not profession, they are considered masculine nouns, for example, dubi, mochi, tupaki, darzi, rababi, pandi. Some small (diminutive) nouns which are ended by long vowel (waw of pashto), considered as

masculine nouns, such as; lalow, jamalow, kakoo, baboo, sadoo, and so on.

Some linguists and grammarians have said about the definition of word for example Yamin that "a word has a meaning, and a meaning unit of a language" (Yamin, 1396). here only the meaning of a word is taken in account. Zyar a Pashto language scholar says: "morpheme is the smallest meaningful unit, which is made of two or more than two sounds". Meanwhile, some scholars have said that a word is the term which is only written and has an independent meaning. In this study, we have identified all the characters of a word, so that can be distinguished from other linguistic elements.

Conclusion

This study is carried out to determine that words have multiple meanings. Sentences are formed from combining words, and sentences are used to convey thoughts and complete meaning. In this study, it was found that words change their meaning in their environment and context. With these many characteristics, words do not have a completely universal meaning. Words are combined in a certain order and with conceptual relationships to express a complete meaning. Based on current literature, words determine their meaning in the environment and context of use and acquire another transferable meaning instead of their original meaning. but also pay close attention to the context of the word, and the environment of use, in order to get the correct meaning in the text, and understand the meaning of the writing correctly. I suggest to readers that when they read a text, they do not only consider the dictionary meanings of words.

We found in this study that words have different structures, as well as meaning is also subjected to change. Words can have different meanings in different contexts. Also, Words have grammatical characteristics, and have synonyms, and antonyms. Some words are homonyms, which become like each other during speaking, and writing, and in root. Moreover, words have several meanings, and have grammatical and semantical characteristics, and words have vocal structures.

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